



WSPTA supports legislation or policies that enhance school safety by incorporating restorative justice models in discipline processes while supporting family and community-based alternatives to achieve youth accountability. Reduce racial and ethnic disparities by local school districts and juvenile justice systems to institute equitable policies on discipline, safety and justice.

WSPTA acknowledges significant changes made to state laws regarding student discipline, juvenile justice and school-to-prison pipeline¹, and encourages community entities governing youth to replace any current inequitable and punitive policies with a set of practices collectively known as restorative justice.

Background

- Washington state spends an average of \$160 per day per youth in state and local detention; it costs an estimated \$27 to educate a child for one day in public school.²
- 27% of Washington's sixth and eighth graders reported being bullied in the last month, on the 2016 Healthy Youth Survey. At least 10% of eighth, tenth and twelfth graders reported missing school because they did not feel safe.³
- Restorative practices create inclusive school communities, where diversity is embraced, and cultural differences understood. Schools provide a safe environment while seeing a decrease in discipline problems, bullying, vandalism and violence. Academic engagement, performance and graduation rates increase.⁴

Proposed Solutions

1. WSPTA supports **equitable, inclusive and consistent statewide policies around student discipline** practices, and policies that encourage collection of current data for the **missed learning time** by students called away from class for all forms of discipline.
2. School districts **must transparently communicate differences in discipline rates** based on systemic changes in practice and culture, not carefully chosen data categories. For example, go to OSPI's "Discipline" Data & Reports web page. Choose "Gap" from the top column. In the drop-down menu Select Group, choose "Race". In the drop-down menu Select Behavior, choose "Failure to Cooperate".⁵
3. **Provide all stakeholders with restorative tools**; with the mindset that until Washington's abysmal American Indian discipline data starts increasing statewide, every child's potential is nowhere near becoming a reality. Support funding and practices that include native and diverse populations in the creation and implementation.⁶

"Yes, we do need to make our schools safer, but we also need to take time to figure out why a student is misbehaving or not attending school – what is happening in the student's life, what is happening to his/her family. I think these two aspects can actually co-exist in a school if we put a good system in place. We can make our schools safer and, at the same time, take care of kids and families." Adie Simmons, founder of the Washington Family Engagement Trust.⁷

For More Information

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Citations

1. OSPI. <http://www.k12.wa.us/studentdiscipline/default.aspx>
2. U.S Department of Education (2016). State and Local Expenditures on Corrections and Education. <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/other/expenditures-corrections-education/brief.pdf>
3. Healthy Youth Survey (2016). <http://www.askhys.net/FactSheets>
4. Restorative Resources website. <http://www.restorativeresources.org>
5. OSPI. <http://www.k12.wa.us/DataAdmin/PerformanceIndicators/DisciplineRates.aspx>
6. Restorative Welcome and Re-entry Circle. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSJ2GPiptvc>
7. Washington State Family and Community Engagement Trust. <http://www.wafamilyengagement.org/about.htm>

**For more information on the WSPTA advocacy program, please visit our website (www.wastatepta.org)*